

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A veterinary inventory management system comprising:

a computer;

a scanning device capable of interfacing to said computer;

at least one printer capable of interfacing to said computer; and

a computer program which enables said computer to:

store in a central database a list including predetermined product levels required for maintaining a veterinary practice inventory;

identify the actual products maintained within the veterinary practice inventory by scanning the plurality of products currently within the veterinary practice inventory;

identify veterinary product shortages by matching the actual products to the list of predetermined product levels;

automatically assign each identified veterinary product shortage to a predetermined veterinary product distributor; and

automatically prepare and transmit a product orders order to each predetermined veterinary product distributor based on each identified veterinary product shortage.
2. (original) A system according to Claim 1 wherein said computer program configures said computer to allow addition of non-standard items to an inventory file.
3. (original) A system according to Claim 2 wherein the non-standard items are specific to a user's specific veterinary practice.
4. (original) A system according to Claim 1 wherein said scanning device is a hand-held bar code scanner.

5. (original) A system according to Claim 4 wherein said scanner is configurable with pre-determined product levels.
6. (original) A system according to Claim 1 wherein said at least one printer comprises a bar code printer and a standard page printer.
7. (original) A system according to Claim 6 wherein for a bar code printer, said system is configured with a label printing software application.
8. (original) A system according to Claim 6 wherein for a standard page printer, said system is configured with a document printing software application.
9. (original) A system according to Claim 1 wherein said computer is configured to generate orders for electronic mailing, facsimile, courier, or postal service delivery.
10. (original) A system according to Claim 1 wherein said computer program configures said computer to display at least one of an examine inventory screen, an order form screen, an inventory history screen, an order history screen, and a maintenance screen.
11. (original) A system according to Claim 10 wherein said examine inventory screen provides a user with a list of total current inventory items, the list including at least one of inventory date, product UPC, product, size, SKU, quantity on hand, minimum allowed and maximum allowed fields.
12. (original) A system according to Claim 10 wherein said examine inventory screen provides a user with a user interface for at least one of changing SKUs, changing quantities on hand, changing previously scanned product quantities, updating inventory items and quantities, and editing product minimum and maximum quantities.
13. (original) A system according to Claim 10 wherein said order form screen provides a user with a user interface for at least one of placing a supplemental order, placing a replenishment order, saving an order, viewing product order reports, deleting orders, sending orders, opening an order,
14. (original) A system according to Claim 13 wherein said replenishment order user interface enables a user to cause said system to automatically generate orders based on at

least one of inventory controls, inventory on hand and a primary distributor designated for each product.

15. (original) A system according to Claim 13 wherein said replenishment order user interface enables a user to cause said system to automatically calculate a ship to arrive by date for the order.

16. (original) A system according to Claim 10 wherein said inventory history screen provides a user with a user interface for viewing archived inventories, which include at least one of an inventory date, a UPC, a product, a size, a SKU, a quantity on hand, a minimum quantity allowed and a maximum quantity allowed.

17. (original) A system according to Claim 10 wherein said order history screen provides a user with a user interface for viewing order histories including at least one of a closed purchase orders number, a distributor's name, a charge number, a charge description, a ship to arrive by date, an order sent date, a comment, and an order total cost field.

18. (original) A system according to Claim 10 wherein said order history screen provides a user with a user interface for viewing a list of items ordered, including at least one of a UPC, a product, a size, a quantity, a unit cost, and a total line cost.

19. (original) A system according to Claim 10 wherein said maintenance screen provides a user with a user interface for selecting at least one of a product catalog screen, a charge number screen, a clinic information screen, a distributor data screen, an inventory controls screen, and a purge history items screen.

20. (original) A system according to Claim 19 wherein said product catalog screen provides a user with a user interface for adding new product records, including at least one of a UPC, a product, a manufacturer, an item type, a weight, a category, a primary distributor, a unit cost, an effective date of cost, and an inactive status date, saving changes to product records, deleting product records, and saving new product records.

21. (original) A system according to Claim 19 wherein said charge number screen provides a user with a user interface for at least one of adding, changing, saving and deleting charge numbers and charge descriptions for the ordering of products.

22. (original) A system according to Claim 19 wherein said clinic information screen provides a user with a user interface for adding and changing at least one of a clinic name, a clinic address, a shipping address, and a billing address, wherein said clinic address, said shipping address, and said billing address includes at least one of a contact last name, a contact first name, an address, a city, a state, a zip code, a telephone number, an extension, an email address, and a facsimile number.

23. (original) A system according to Claim 19 wherein said distributor data screen provides a user with a user interface for viewing, adding, deleting, and updating distributor records including at least one of a distributor ID, a distributor name, a contact last name, a contact first name, an address, a city, a state, a zip code, a telephone number, an extension, an email address, a facsimile number, and a clinic account number.

24. (original) A system according to Claim 19 wherein said inventory controls screen provides a user with a user interface for viewing and editing order controls including at least one of a UPC, a SKU, a minimum allowed, and a maximum allowed.

25. (original) A system according to Claim 19 wherein said purge history items screen provides a user with a user interface for removing order history records, inventory history records, discontinued products and their cost records, if the records are 18 months old or older.

~~25.~~ 26. (currently amended) A system according to Claim 19 wherein said purge history items screen provides a user with a user interface for removing product costs whose cost-effective dates are greater than 18 months old, unless a product cost record that is older than 18 months is the most current product cost record.

~~26.~~ 27. (currently amended) A computer programmed to:

store in a central database a list including predetermined product levels required for maintaining a veterinary practice inventory;

identify the actual products maintained within the veterinary practice inventory by scanning the plurality of products currently within the veterinary practice inventory;

identify veterinary product shortages by matching the actual products to the list of predetermined product levels;

automatically assign each identified veterinary product shortage to a predetermined veterinary product distributor; and

allow addition of non-standard items to a veterinary practice inventory; and

automatically prepare and transmit a product orders order to each predetermined veterinary product distributor based on each identified veterinary product shortage ~~for~~ using at least one of electronic mailing, facsimile, courier, or postal service delivery.

~~27.~~ 28. (currently amended) A computer according to ~~Claim 26~~ Claim 27 further programmed to display an examine inventory screen which provides a user with a list of total current inventory items, the list including at least one of inventory date, product UPC, product, size, SKU, quantity on hand, minimum allowed and maximum allowed fields.

~~28.~~ 29. (currently amended) A computer according to ~~Claim 26~~ Claim 27 further programmed to display an order form screen which provides a user with a user interface for at least one of placing a supplemental order, placing a replenishment order, saving an order, viewing product order reports, deleting orders, sending orders, and opening an order.

~~29.~~ 30. (currently amended) A computer according to ~~Claim 26~~ Claim 27 further programmed to display an inventory history screen which provides a user with a user interface for viewing archived inventories, which include at least one of an inventory date, a UPC, a product, a size, a SKU, a quantity on hand, a minimum quantity allowed and a maximum quantity allowed.

~~30.~~ 31. (currently amended) A computer according to ~~Claim 26~~ Claim 27 further programmed to display an order history screen which provides a user with a user interface for viewing order histories including at least one of a closed purchase orders number, a distributor's name, a charge number, a charge description, a ship to arrive by date, an order sent date, a comment, an order total cost field, and a list of items ordered, including at least one of a UPC, a product, a size, a quantity, a unit cost, and a total line cost.

~~31.~~ 32. (currently amended) A computer according to ~~Claim 26~~ Claim 27 further programmed to display a screen which provides a user interface for at least one of adding new product records, updating charge numbers and charge descriptions, updating clinic information, updating distributor data, updating order controls, and purging records.

~~32.~~ 33. (currently amended) A computer according to ~~Claim 31~~ Claim 32 wherein to purge records, said computer provides a user with a user interface for removing product costs whose cost-effective dates are greater than 18 months old, unless a product cost record that is older than 18 months is the most current product cost record.

~~33.~~ 34. (currently amended) A computer according to ~~Claim 26~~ Claim 27 programmed to automatically generate orders based on at least one of inventory controls, inventory on hand and a primary distributor designated for each product.

~~34.~~ 35. (currently amended) A method for creating an inventory control using a veterinary inventory management system, comprising:

displaying a maintenance list;

selecting an inventory controls link from the maintenance list;

displaying an inventory controls screen;

selecting a set product controls link;

adding products from a product UPC list; and

saving the added product entries.

~~35.~~ 36. (currently amended) A method according to ~~Claim 34~~ Claim 35 further comprising entering at least one of a SKU, a minimum allowed per unit amount, and a minimum allowed per unit amount.

~~36.~~ 37. (currently amended) A method for placing replenishment orders using a veterinary inventory management system, comprising:

storing in a central database a list including predetermined product levels required for maintaining a veterinary practice inventory;

identifying the actual products maintained within the veterinary practice inventory by scanning the plurality of products currently within the veterinary practice inventory;

identifying veterinary product shortages by matching the actual products to the list of predetermined product levels;

automatically assigning each identified veterinary product shortage to a predetermined veterinary product distributor;

automatically creating a product order for each predetermined veterinary product distributor based on each identified veterinary product shortage;

displaying a number of orders that have been created;

selecting one of the orders; and

sending the order using at least one of electronic mailing, facsimile, courier, or postal service delivery.

37. ~~38.~~ (currently amended) A method according to ~~Claim 36~~ Claim 37 further comprising displaying an order form.

38. ~~39.~~ (currently amended) A method according to ~~Claim 36~~ Claim 37 wherein displaying a number of orders that have been created comprises listing created orders in an open purchase order list box.

39. ~~40.~~ (currently amended) A method for placing supplemental orders using a veterinary inventory management system, comprising:

storing in a central database a list including predetermined product levels required for maintaining a veterinary practice inventory;

identifying the actual products maintained within the veterinary practice inventory by scanning the plurality of products currently within the veterinary practice inventory;

identifying veterinary product shortages by matching the actual products to the list of predetermined product levels;

automatically assigning each identified veterinary product shortage to a predetermined veterinary product distributor;

automatically creating a product order for each predetermined veterinary product distributor based on each identified veterinary product shortage, wherein automatically creating a product order includes

displaying an order form screen;

selecting a supplemental order form link from the order form screen;

displaying a new order screen;

entering at least one of a purchase order number, a distributor's name, a charge number, a ship to arrive by date, and comments for items within the supplemental order;

moving the items to an order; and

sending the order.

40. 41. (currently amended) A method of updating an inventory using a veterinary inventory management system, comprising:

storing in a central database a list including predetermined product levels required for maintaining a veterinary practice inventory;

identifying the actual products maintained within the veterinary practice inventory by scanning the plurality of products currently within the veterinary practice inventory;

identifying veterinary product shortages by matching the actual products to the list of predetermined product levels;

automatically assigning each identified veterinary product shortage to a predetermined veterinary product distributor;

displaying an examine inventory screen;

selecting to add new products from the screen;

saving the new product additions into the inventory; and

viewing the inventory; and

automatically creating a product order for each predetermined veterinary product distributor based on each identified veterinary product shortage.

41. ~~42.~~ (currently amended) A method according to ~~Claim 40~~ Claim 41 further comprising entering a SKU and a quantity on hand amount.

42. ~~43.~~ (currently amended) A method according to ~~Claim 40~~ Claim 41 wherein new products are added from a scanner memory.

43. ~~44.~~ (currently amended) A method according to ~~Claim 42~~ Claim 43 further comprising:

recognizing products uploaded from the scanner memory that are not a part of a current catalog;

prompting a user to view the non-cataloged products;

displaying an add items to catalog screen;

entering at least one of a product, a category, an item type, a manufacturer, a weight, a primary distributor, and a unit cost for the non-cataloged products;

adding at least one of the products to the catalog; and

creating a new label file for printing of barcode labels for the newly added products.